

about what we do with these men and women when they come home, whose lives have been changed dramatically. These are the costs of war, and they don't get nearly the attention on the Senate floor, in the media, or among policymakers as do the actually going to war and sending our troops.

It is shameful that veterans have these rates of unemployment, addiction, suicide, and homelessness. We have made progress on homelessness through a combination of increased Federal investments and improved services. Over the past 5 years, homelessness among veterans has declined 36 percent, but too many remain on the streets.

Veterans comprise 12 percent of the Nation's adult homeless population. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, some 48,000 veterans were homeless—including 1,200 in my State of Ohio—on a given night in January when a census, if you will, was taken about homelessness. That is 48,000 too many. It is a disgrace that they serve our country with honor, and thousands are left without a roof over their head. Think about that. We send them off to war. They are sometimes damaged by their time in combat or their time in the military, and we don't care enough to find them places to live and find them drug treatment and find them jobs and give the kind of help to them that they gave to our country.

I met the veterans the organizations serve—organizations such as the VFW, American Legion, these groups and counties called veteran service organizations. My State is blessed to have one in each of our 88 counties. I hear about their stories of perseverance. They are inspiring.

I visited the Joseph House in Cincinnati, where Nathan Pelletier and his team of dedicated staff and volunteers provided addiction treatment and transitional housing to veterans. We heard from Britton Carter, who was formerly homeless. He completed the treatment program at Joseph House. He now works as a case manager helping other struggling veterans. He spoke about the trials he has overcome. He said:

As a small youth I fell in love with playing army men. My mom would buy me little army men, and I dreamed of one day being a soldier.

God had given me the gift of being a pretty good basketball player and as such I became the first freshman to play and start on any varsity team. With success came fans and countless people, many of whom had an agenda that didn't necessarily have my best interest at stake.

From the early years of high school I found myself star struck, and I would end up in the company of those who used drugs—first pot and wine, later I was introduced to heroin and cocaine.

With the grace of God, I was given the opportunity to attend college at New Mexico Military Institution in Roswell, NM. There were other offers from schools, but I was attracted to the opportunity of being able to play army man once again.

I was caught with drugs and kicked out of school, and as a result I lost the chance to

become an officer in the United States military. I went to another college—only to have my drug addiction lead me to poor choices that brought my career closer and closer to an end, where the only thing I felt I had to hold onto would be a career in the Army.

I enlisted, and discovered that being away from home . . . left me face-to-face with those old demons, and once again I was being discharged. . . . It wasn't long after my return . . . that I found myself in and out of trouble. Having no insurance to pay for the treatment I truly needed to address my addiction, and nearly a life sentence on the installment plan and years of struggle. . . .

He goes on.

[The Joseph House] was the one place that believed in never leaving any soldier behind—the Joseph House.

It was while at the Joseph House that I had the opportunity to get the treatment I so badly needed. . . . Today, thanks to God and his mercy. . . .

He goes on to talk about some of the things he has done. He has written a play. He has produced a play. He has done wonderful things, especially for his fellow veterans. His story should serve as a reminder to all of us that we should not leave the men and women who serve this country.

There are so many stories like his. In October I was in Dayton, where I met with Robert White at the Homefull organization—Homefull as opposed to the homeless. He served 4 years in the Army Reserves and 1 year on Active Duty. He was honorably discharged in 1980 and spent years working, facing challenges that he said left him “lower than low.” He said, “As soon as I left for basic training, I was homeless.” He talked about his work, his time in shelters. He said the result was always the same. He said, “I entered homeless, and no matter how good I did, I still left homeless.”

Then, on the July Fourth weekend 7 years ago, he entered Homefull's VA per diem transitional supportive housing program. He became a model guest at Homefull. He got a job in Trotwood, a community near Dayton. He still has the same job. Homefull connected Mr. White with its partner organization, which helped him achieve home ownership. Today he has gone from homeless veteran to owner of his own home. That is because of his community in Dayton, because of this organization Homefull, and it is because of the partnership with the Veterans' Administration, whose funding is always under jeopardy because of many Members of the Senate and House who simply don't put the same effort into helping veterans as they do into funding the military.

Last month I was in Cleveland. I visited the Supportive Housing Home for Veterans. I visited the Trumbull Metropolitan Housing Authority in Youngstown. These organizations are providing work that is so important. We owe them our support.

Even one veteran on the street means Congress isn't doing enough to tackle this problem. That is why I joined my colleagues in introducing the Veteran Housing Stability Act of 2015, which

would make meaningful improvements to services for homeless veterans and give more veterans access to housing opportunities.

President Kennedy, in his 1963 Thanksgiving proclamation—I believe the week before he died—said, “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”

Sure, we come to this floor. We send people off to battle. Surely we need to do that sometimes. Sure, we come to the floor and talk about veterans, but so often we don't live up to the obligations to help these veterans deal with their homelessness, to help veterans deal with suicide, with the threat of suicide, the likelihood of suicide for some of them, help our veterans deal with drug addiction, help our veterans deal with mental health issues. Often these are costs of war that we simply don't discuss on the Senate floor. It is so important that we do. I hope my colleagues will join me in ensuring every veteran has an opportunity to succeed.

TRIBUTE TO MEGHAN DUBYAK

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, in closing, I want to recognize a long-term staff member, a young woman who has served in my office, Meghan Dubyak. She has been my communications director for most of my years in the Senate. She comes from Shaker Heights, OH. She has been a terrific public servant. Today is her last day. This is about her last hour on the job, although she is going with me tonight to do one other appearance. Meghan is planning to get married this summer. She is taking tomorrow off and is going on Monday to join the staff of the Vice President of the United States, JOE BIDEN. She has been an incredible employee. I wish her well. My wife Connie and I will love Meghan as long as we have the privilege of knowing her in the years ahead.

So thank you to Meghan.
I yield the floor.

REMEMBERING OFFICER DANIEL ELLIS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a Kentucky police officer who was tragically lost in the line of duty. Officer Daniel Ellis of the Richmond Police Department was shot while searching an apartment for a robbery suspect on November 4, 2015, and died from his wounds 2 days later. He was 33 years old.

“Our lives will never be the same again, the lives of his fellow officers and of his family will never be the same,” Richmond Police Chief Larry Brock said during Officer Ellis's funeral. “He turned out to be a great police officer. He was one of those guys that just got it and got it early.”

Officer Ellis started at the department on August 11, 2008. He was known as a kindhearted man who treated others with dignity and respect. One day